



THE OLIVE BRANCH

NOVEMBER 2020



From the desk of Pastor Ryan

Sisters and brothers, make no mistake, we are living in exile. We haven't been forced out of our homes and there is no occupying army, but we're in exile all the same. In the past few months, our worlds have been turned upside down. How we live, work, learn, shop, worship, and play look different than they did just 8 months ago. Some of us are isolated from friends and family members and some of us have even lost loved ones to this virus or from the loneliness and anxiety the virus caused. I don't know how this pandemic compares to wartime or the Great Depression or the polio epidemic, but I do know that for most people, 2020 is looking like a serious low point. In our holy scriptures the Israelites were also at a serious low point, exiled in the enemy territory of Babylon, when God spoke this message to them through the prophet Jeremiah:

Build houses and live in them; plant gardens and eat what they produce. Take wives and have sons and daughters; take wives for your sons, and give your daughters in marriage, that they may bear sons and daughters; multiply there, and do not decrease. But seek the welfare of the city where I have sent you into exile, and pray to the Lord on its behalf, for in its welfare you will find your welfare. - Jeremiah 29:4-7

The point being that 2020 may not be our best year, but it's all we've got. We can't live in the past and we can't predict the future, but we can work right now toward better days. We can be thankful for the ways God still shows up in all this mess. We can recognize that God actually draws nearer to us when we are struggling. We can do all the good we're able to do and trust that God's grace is big enough to cover what we're not able to do. We can be more kind and generous to one another instead of less. We can wait and we can pray and we can hope and we can trust. These things should be second nature to us! After all, we've been doing them for over 2000 years.

The Israelites didn't want to hear the divine equivalent of "Keep calm and carry on." What they wanted to hear was "This will be over soon, then you can get back to normal." That's not how God works. God moves the world along and things constantly change. What is the same, yesterday, today, and forever is God's unceasing mercy, love, and grace. God persistently gives those things to us, even when we don't deserve them. As followers of Jesus Christ, people transformed by God's grace, can't we offer one another the same? Aren't we to be different from the world around us so they'll know we are Christians by our love? We have today and we can do this now. This is the day the Lord has made. Let us rejoice and be exceptional glad in it.

In Jesus' mercy, love, and grace,
Pastor Ryan

Pastor Ryan will be on vacation November 8-21. Please call Vicar Denise at 704-706-4894 with any pastoral care emergencies.

Advent Book Club - "Incarnation" by Adam Hamilton is this year's Advent book selection. In the face of uncertainty and conflict, Christians reclaim the Christ Child who brings us together, heals our hearts, and calls us to bring light into the darkness. Now more than ever, we invite you to reflect upon the significance of the Christ Child for our lives and world today! Books can be purchased from Amazon.com.

MT. OLIVE LUTHERAN CHURCH (ELCA)
2780 NORTH CENTER STREET
HICKORY, NC 28601
PHONE: 828-324-6198

**DEADLINE FOR DECEMBER
NEWSLETTER ARTICLES:
November 15**

**Please note: newsletter articles
should be sent to Karen at
mtolive@embarqmail.com**

Mt. Olive Re-gathering Update

NC SYNOD RE-GATHERING RECOMMENDATIONS

Approved by Synod Council, September 11, 2020

Grounded in our vision and core values, the North Carolina Synod Council makes the following recommendations for the congregations of the NC Synod:

- 1. We recommend refraining from in-person gatherings of more than 25 people indoors and 50 out doors until the NC governor moves us into Phase Three.**
- 2. We recommend children or youth events of no more than 25 people, outdoors, physically-distanced, and with face coverings.**
- 3. We recommend developing in-person gathering protocols and an implementation plan in writing prior to gathering, especially around distribution of communion.**
- 4. We recommend beginning to celebrate Holy Communion with appropriate protocols, following the physically-distanced 25 indoors and 50 outdoor recommendations of Phase 2.5.**
- 5. We continue to recommend no singing or chanting.**
- 6. We continue to recommend no fellowship meals, coffee hours, or other such events that make physical distancing difficult.**

If you wish to host a small group (25 or less) inside the church building or 50 or less outdoors, please contact Church Administrator Karen Abernathy, who will provide you with meeting guidelines, waivers, and a request form. Once the request is approved (which will most likely happen same-day) and waivers signed, you may meet with your group!

The Call of the Holy Spirit

One consequence of Covid-life is that much of your church staff's work is no longer visible. While you are away from the physical building, you might not realize how hard your staff is working. But especially for your deacons, even in non-Covid times, our work can be very much "behind the scenes." What the church experiences is often the *result* of our work.

Your deacons at Mt. Olive specialize in children's ministry and worship and music, but we also have other gifts that serve your call from the Holy Spirit. In this time of Covid, we have increasingly worked in more flexible roles as the pandemic has strongly altered how we minister. Much of our work abruptly shifted to the online environment last March as almost overnight, staff had to quickly discover how to bring worship online. We have experienced a continuous learning curve that persists even now. This kind of rapid change is stressful. Have you prayed for your pastor lately?

During this pandemic, Deacon Liz has continued an amazing ministry with our children while branching out to become a technology expert! Please thank her for finding the tools to make our online worship more creative and for working in the background to facilitate all the zoom meetings that happen. Last March and April, Deacon Liz led 2 different Bible Studies via Zoom. She did front-yard "drop-offs" of camp-in-a-box, signs for the beginning of school, VBS, Sunday School, and other supplies to keep the children engaged. She posted weekly children's sermons on social media, as well as other videos for faith practices throughout summer. Deacon Liz began meeting in-person with the children for games and programs starting in September. She also created take-home materials to keep all of us more engaged in our spiritual lives at home. Pray for Deacon Liz and her family.

When Covid hit, Pastor Ryan asked us to contact people occasionally to "check-in" with them during the pandemic. For me, this has blossomed into an ongoing ministry to pray for you, and to check-in with weekly cards, texts and phone calls. Some of my other flexible duties have included researching copyright permissions for our online music and crafting appropriate legal statements; communicating church news through the web page, Facebook, and our telephone system (One Call Now); coordinating a local group for the Bishop's Gospel of Mark Bible study; recording and uploading online music for a pandemic weary people; calculating and recording online worship attendance statistics; and viewing many, many online continuing education webinars to learn how to serve in this very unusual time!

Yes, we are working very hard to follow the call of the Holy Spirit, often in exciting and creative new ways. While you may not witness what we do, please know that we always have you in our minds and hearts as we work. We listen for the call of the Holy Spirit, adapt our tasks to follow, and pray for you and your health. Will you pray for us during this time? May the peace of Christ be with us all.

Deacon Lynne



Teen Ministry (grades 6-12)

Confirmation meets via ZOOM on Sunday, November 8 from 4-5:15 p.m. This month the Reverend CeCee Mills will present the topic of Prayer and our small group will discuss together afterward.

Teen Service Project – On Sunday, November 22 from 2:30-4:30 p.m. we'll be helping with the Catawba County Backpack Program packing bags at their warehouse. The warehouse, which will be opened up and ventilated well, is at 1925 Tate Blvd SE Hickory, NC 28602. Masks are required.

Save the date – Saturday, December 5 beginning at 9:30 a.m. our teens will decorate the Sanctuary/Chancel for Advent/Christmas. There will be donuts! Masks are required.



Drew Hitchcock was confirmed on Reformation Sunday, October 25 at a private family ceremony in our Sanctuary. Congrats and blessings to Drew as he continues his lifelong journey of faith.



1. What were the equal parts that the Jewish day was divided into called?
2. Who was the most famous armour-bearer of King Saul?
3. Name the sister-in-law of Ruth.
4. Who was struck with blindness for three days?

November Happenings at Mt. Olive

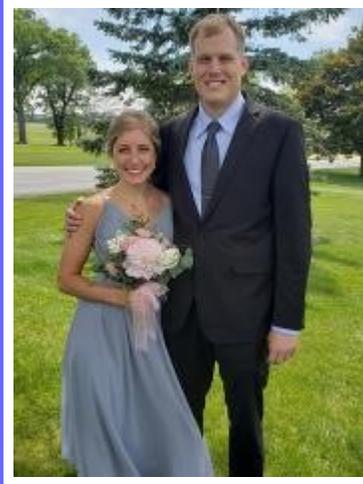
Trivia Answer:

1. Watches (e.g. Matt 14:25)
2. David (1 Sam 16:21)
3. Oprah (Ruth 1:4-14)
4. Paul (Acts 9:9)

Congratulations and blessings to Mt. Olive member, Ethan Overcash, who was called and ordained at Emmanuel ELCA in High Point on October 23. May God continue to do great things through you, Ethan!

November Birthdays

Nov 1	Cindy Eliasson Robert Young
Nov 3	Katelyn Bazzle
Nov 4	Mary Black
Nov 5	Mary Crowell
Nov 6	Karen Coulter Mark Gosnell
Nov 9	John Hegert Daniel Helton
Nov 11	Pat Drum
Nov 14	Karen Birkedal
Nov 15	Shirley Griggs
Nov 20	Wayne Hefner
Nov 21	Emma Barger-Hubbard
Nov 24	Darrell Davis Graham Ormand Sarah Seabock
Nov 27	Jacob Rink
Nov 29	Angelina Perry Sylvia Price
Nov 30	Gwen Kingsley Addison Sigmon



AJ and Molly Neils (pronounced Niles) were married at a small outdoor ceremony officiated by Pastor Ryan on Saturday, October 6 in Asheville. The couple have been worshipping with us for over a year. May God continue to bless this wonderful couple!

Wrapping Chrismons & Lotion

Thanks to all who helped to make the Chrismons. Now we will be wrapping the Chrismons and lotion. Please meet in Heritage Hall on November 22nd from 2:30-4:00 p.m. Thanks for all your help and hope to see you on the 22nd.

Sympathy for Connie Burleson and family on the death of her father, Conrad Umberger.

Sympathy for Brenda Bolick and family on the death of her brother, Jerry.



Join us in a Celebration of our Special Olympics Catawba County Athletes and their Fall Season Sports and Fitness Activities!

Saturday, Nov. 14th, 11:00 am to 12:30 pm
Mt. Olive Lutheran Church
Lower Parking Lot Drop-off Area

Special Olympics Catawba County will be cheering athletes and providing them gifts as they come through the drop-off and stay in their cars. If you wish to join us as a cheerleader, please feel free to bring a sign, noisemaker or pom-pom to celebrate our athletes!



Thoughts from Vicar Denise

Several weeks ago, on Sunday September 20, Pastor Ryan spoke briefly about honoring sabbath. The Hebrew word is “shabbat” and means rest. Each of us, as God intends, needs rest. I’m not talking about our 7-12 hours of sleep each night, nor even naps (however wonderful and rare those are). In our world of 8-14 plus work hours, five days a week, we all need time to rest. That rest may come in the form of a daily down time to unplug, reflect, and rest. I remember my dad would come home from work and sit in his recliner for awhile before supper to recharge. That was part of his down time. What does your sabbath look like? When do you rest and have down time?

It is important to honor our time of rest - however it looks. For those of us in church service, this time can be difficult to honor. We get caught up in our work, in answering emails or text messages, in checking on those in our charge (that would be each of you). If we’re not intentional about it, there are times we don’t get our needed rest. Pastor Ryan reminded me of this my first week as your vicar. Yes, even I had to be reminded to honor my sabbath. So, when does your church staff take time off? There are times we schedule vacation - actual planned time away. Since the church office is closed every Friday and Saturday, those are our regular days for rest. It is our sabbath time with our families - to reconnect. It is our time to reflect, rest, recharge and unplug.

Hoping to model healthy and faithful rest habits for our congregation, your church staff is committed to being intentional in honoring one another’s times of rest. Unless absolutely necessary, we are not going to text or call each other on Fridays or Saturdays. Also, since it’s very important to us to be available to you for emergencies whenever they occur, we trust that you will text or call us only for emergencies on our days of rest. That being said, emergencies and extreme needs don’t happen during “normal operating hours”. We are always here for you and expect you to contact us whenever a crisis arises for you or your family. Our hope is you observe sabbath rest in your week and we thank you for helping us to honor ours.

Peace~ Vicar Denise

Vicar Denise Henry’s Installation

Even with a global pandemic and a group of gentlemen low in technical prowess, our Men's Bible Study has held strong and met weekly via ZOOM. In addition to Bible study, this group has "taken their show on the road" to sing (masked, distanced, and outdoors) for a few members whose health was failing. This group has been privileged to be invited onto the holy ground of folks who are facing difficult times and bring a little comfort to them. If you would like to join us, please contact Pastor Ryan. Meetings are at 8 a.m. each Tuesday.



Hymn of the Week Virtual Choir

By now you may have heard of the local “community” choir that is recording an online hymn each week under the direction of Lenoir-Rhyne’s Director of Choral Activities & Coordinator of Sacred Music Program – Dr. Ryan Luhrs. The purpose of the **Hymn of the Week Virtual Choir** is to provide a virtual choral experience for singers during this time of social distancing AND a hymn related to each Sunday’s readings and themes found in the Revised Common Lectionary. Even though a virtual choir is not the same as in-person music making, this *is* an opportunity for broader ecumenical activity and virtual relationship building that might not otherwise take place. **All are welcome to participate regardless of background.**

Each week, Dr. Luhrs emails participants “parts” videos to sing along with and instructions to record your own voice. Here are the instructions so that you can gauge if you have the technology needed to participate, which is really not that complicated!

To participate, you’ll need:

1. Two internet-connected devices (1 phone and 1 computer would work)
2. Headphones
3. The ability to record yourself singing on one of the devices. “Voice Memos” on an iPhone works great. Most smart phones have some type of voice recording application.
4. Then you send the recording to Dr. Luhrs via text message or attach it to an email. If you’re using the “Voice Memo” app on an iPhone:
 - a. Touch the title (often named as a location)
 - b. Touch the three blue dots
 - c. Select “share”
 - d. Select green “messages” app (you may have to scroll apps left to right to find it)
 - e. Type in my phone number and send.

If you would like to participate, please contact Dr. Luhrs at (507) 461-3713 or Ryan.Luhrs@lr.edu. The group has a YouTube page so you can view their past recordings at <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCQmAtg25TUqF00InxNJIxw>. They also have a Facebook page if you would like to look at the recordings there. Just search in Facebook on “Hymn of the Week Virtual Choir.” Let Deacon Lynne know if you decide to participate!

Worship Always & Worship All Ways

If you don’t have internet access: Mt. Olive is currently holding one drive-in service each month with drive-thru Communion afterward. Drive-thru Communion is offered at least twice per month. In addition to Mt. Olive’s worship offerings, the NC Synod has coordinated a shared worship experience you can access via your telephone. To listen to Worship anytime, call toll-free: 833-924-1988. Press 1 to hear the full worship. Press 2 to hear only the sermon. Press 3 to hear only the prayers.

If you have internet access, but not a Facebook account: All of the above worship options are available to you. Also, even without a Facebook account, you can watch Mt. Olive worship live on our Facebook Business Page by searching for “Mt. Olive Lutheran Church, Hickory, NC – ELCA.” Without a Facebook account you cannot leave comments. Each Sunday afternoon the morning’s worship is uploaded to our YouTube channel “Mt. Olive Lutheran Church Hickory NC” for you to watch any time. You can also watch the NC Synod’s worship online at www.facebook.com/NCSynod/

If you have internet access and a Facebook account: All of the above worship options are available to you. In addition, you can comment and interact in real time during live worship on Facebook and join the “Mt. Olive Lutheran – Hickory” Facebook Group.

Deacon Lynne will continue sending weekly One Call Now messages to let you know of the weekly worship opportunities.

Longing for Connection or Purpose? Here are some opportunities!

Connection Ministry Team – We’re looking for at least 11 volunteers (Pastor Ryan has volunteered for November) for a team which will take “Happy Birthday Month!” yard signs to each member on the month of their birthday. Team members would volunteer for a specific month then, at the beginning of each month, team members would simply take the signs and put them up in the yard at each house with a birthday that month. Please contact Pastor Ryan, if interested.

Sign Ministry Team – We invested in a beautiful electric sign to communicate with our neighbors passing by our church building on Hwy 127. Now we need a team who will make the most of that investment. Deacon Liz will offer a training workshop on November 17th at 1pm on how to change the sign. Hopefully we will have enough volunteers so that each person will be responsible for one month of messages, changed weekly. Please contact Deacon Liz, if interested.

Soup Kitchen Volunteers are needed every second Monday of each month from 11:15 a.m.-12:45 p.m. You will serve up to-go meals in an assembly line. Masks required.

Drivers Needed – Some of our members are now in situations where they can no longer drive and therefore need help getting to appointments and the like. If you are willing to provide occasional transportation for these members, please contact our Church Administrator, Karen Abernathy so she can maintain a list of volunteers for when those needs arise.

All Saints' Day

Brenda Killian Camp

Mildred Wilson Hall Salley

Robert Henry Welch

Virginia Killian

Edith Mae Crocker

Gralen Paul Waldon

Bois D. Crocker

Catherine A. Adams

Martha (Sunny) Little Price

Sarah Anne Hollar Lyerly

Leigh Ashley Thompson

Mary P. Wright

Morris "Rusty" Russell Hoover

Annie Jane Wood Everhart

Jerry Simmons

Conrad Dayne Umberger

Kathy Aiken McQuinn

All Saints Sunday:

DURING ALL SAINTS, WHERE THINGS
HAVE NOT BEEN EASY, WE ARE FINDING
NEW WAYS TO GIVE ROOM FOR WHAT IS
GOING ON IN OUR WORLD.

ON SUNDAY FROM 10:30-12:30, WE WILL
BE DOING A CANDLE LIGHTING
OUTSIDE.

IN THIS WE ENCOURAGE YOU TO NAME
YOUR GRIEF, GIVE THANKS FOR THE
SAINTS OF OUR CHURCH, AND HOPE.

PLEASE REMEMBER TO WEAR A MASK
AND SOCIAL DISTANCE.
THANK YOU!

All Saints Outdoor Prayer Station – Following online worship on Sunday, November 1, you are invited to visit our outdoor prayer station in the lower parking lot from 10:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. Candles will be provided for you to light in remembrance of a loved one or loved ones.

Dear Ministers of Mt. Olive Lutheran Church,

I feel like since March, things really have been up in the air and continue to be that way. I am grateful for the opportunity to serve you all during this time, working not only with our children and families, but also with the technology we have added at the church, the odds and ends that need to get done, and on some pastoral care matters. It seems during these times we are taking on more roles than ever and taking time from our families and getting rest to make sure we are serving the church.

Something that has happened outside of children's ministry is:

- A) The re-gathering task force has been meeting for almost 2-3 months now. They are a group that has taken responsibility for protocols, keeping people safe, and making tough decisions about how we do ministry. The task force is comprised of knowledgeable individuals in the healthcare and education field and I am grateful for what they have accomplished with Pastor Ryan.
- B) ZOOM has happened. Whether we love it or hate it, we have been using this tech to be able to hold bible studies, council meetings, coffee hours, Men's Bible Study, Sunday School, and other meetings to keep the day to day operations of the church rolling. If you have not joined us for any of these events, we encourage you to do so.
- C) We have added a piece of equipment that allows us to serve you better than before for service. By utilizing this equipment we can manage to make worship more enjoyable and allowing us to be more involved with the community. If you would love to help, please see me. We are always looking for people to run the program and assist with worship.
- D) Faith Formation bags were distributed to the congregation for special seasons of the church. This allowed us to engage with everyone either after or during worship. Three bible studies have been done since March, with more possibilities for more as we move forward.
- E) Deacon Lynne has been keeping up with music and copyright issues. She, also, has called and sent cards to all our children's ministry and choir. In this time, she has done our website, making sure the videos are downloaded and posted for everyone. She has lead children's music and is starting up a handbell choir.
- F) Engagement with our Kid's Korner happened all the way through the semester thanks to Deacon Lynne, engaging the community with learning and the love of Jesus.
- G) We have had 13 funerals this year, 12 in the last 6 months. We are blessed to have Pastor Ryan, who is managing pastoral care matters, worship, the day to day running of ministry, and being there to handle the transition from life to death for both persons and families.

This does not touch the surface about half of the things being put out for the church. I know my colleagues are all taking on rolls within the church, sacrificing to do their best by Mt. Olive.

If you are looking for things to be involved with or help with, contact us. We have stuff we really could use your help with.

In the meantime, we love you and miss you

In Peace,

Deacon Liz Brendle Fox.

Council Minutes

Mt. Olive council conference call, Sunday, October 4, at 10:30am via ZOOM

Attending: Mickey Barnett, Pam Sigmon, Geoff Yount, Liz Fox, Samantha Seabock, Sue Seabock, Pastor Ryan, Denise Henry, Carly Seif, Chris Frye

Absent: Gerald Burke, Becky Anthony, Herm Price, Chasity Richter, Lynne Reed

Pastor Ryan opened the meeting with prayer.

Drivers for some Mt. Olive members: Pastor mentioned a group of members who no longer drive and need drivers to carry them where they need to go. We need members to help with this. Driving Ministry was suggested for the foreseeable future. We need to perform as much care as we can safely do during this pandemic. Newsletter note, One-Call Now info call requesting additional Care team members for ZOOM meeting. Meetings (inside) 25 people or less. We are trying to stay consistent with the governor's plan.

Homecoming is next week: Sunday, October 11. Plans are in place for several special inclusions into the worship service that can be done safely.

Trunk or Treat: Gloves and masks will be required; 15 cars at most. There will be NO dinner served. Truck or Treat will be held in lower parking lot. No getting out of your cars. Fun evening is planned. There will be blow-up decorations (inflatables). **They need candy, candy, candy! Loads of candy!** Email Liz to volunteer your car for that evening. Members can pack small bags of candy to be given out. Add message to front sign. (Liz)

Bring candy candy, candy to church office! A lot of candy will be needed on Saturday, October 31!

Drive-in church: Scheduled for Sunday, Oct 18, 9:30am. Pastor Ryan needs help to set-up equipment. Wants to raise backdrop that is used. Needs help in moving stuff into place. Mickey will get Property Brothers to help with set up.

November 8-21, 2020: Pastor Ryan will be on vacation. He plans to record one of the sermons prior to leaving. He would be attending a retreat in Florida.

Skateboarding on church property: A sign such as "No skateboarding at all" is discouraging but we are concerned about liability. Liz will check with insurance regarding liability before we decide on signage concerning this issue.

Drive-thru communion: Sue Seabock mentioned someone had suggested that there could be small groups to gather after they receive the sacrament, park, and receive blessing by Pastor Ryan, then leave. Just a suggestion of a different way of receiving Holy Communion during the pandemic.

Denise Henry update: She says everything is going well since she has arrived at Mt. Olive.

Wi-Fi in parking lot: We have had at least 30 people using our wi-fi during the last week. With comments like 'this is what church should look like!' have been received.

Meeting concluded at 11:15 with the Lord's Prayer.

[Prayer Ventures— a prayer for each day of the month]

- 1 *All Saints Day* Give thanks for everyone God has gathered in the body of Christ — those who are living and those who have passed. Praise God for the diverse talents given to us that the Spirit uses to encourage faith in others, strengthen the community of believers and do God's work in the world.
- 2 *Native American Heritage Month* Lutheran witness of the gospel with American Indian and Alaska Native people stretches back more than 350 years. The ELCA's American Indian and Alaska Native membership is around 4,850, and American Indian and Alaska Native Ministries works with 30 native congregations around the country. Pray for the ministry and witness of native congregations and the work of the American Indian and Alaska Native Lutheran Association, that they might flourish and grow.
- 3 Pray for the Spirit to grant us wisdom and courage in our discernment and decisions as we elect leaders for our nation, states and communities. Pray that those chosen to serve will do so with compassion, justice, concern for people with critical needs and a commitment to the well-being of all people and communities.
- 4 We are called to be disciples and students of Jesus, to study Scripture and to learn from the bearers of faith who live by what they teach. Pray that the Spirit will open our hearts and sharpen our minds to distinguish between those who are trustworthy and those who use their position and powers of persuasion to tempt us from the truth and ways of God.
- 5 Pray for people and communities in the western states that are fighting wildfires, recovering from the devastation left by recent fires and worrying about the increased threat of wildfires and longer fire seasons. Ask God to protect the firefighters, emergency responders and volunteers who work tirelessly and at great personal risk to protect lives and property.
- 6 Praise God for leading us and renewing us with light and truth throughout our baptismal journey.
- 7 Continue to pray for our global companions as some countries experience a new wave of COVID-19 infections. Pray for those countries most affected, that we might share physical and spiritual support and resources, mutually encourage leaders and congregations, and wait patiently for the day when we can celebrate our unity and work together in person.
- 8 Pray for insight and wisdom from the Spirit that will help us lead lives pleasing to God and glimpse the kingdom of heaven.
- 9 Give thanks to God for Augsburg Fortress, the publishing ministry of the ELCA. Ask God to bless and further its work creating resources and partnerships "to support the ministries of faith communities in communicating the good news of God's liberating grace."
- 10 Pause, reflect and pray for God's help with whatever is most troubling or perplexing in your life right now that thing that keeps you awake at night.
- 11 *Veterans Day* Remember and give thanks for the service and personal sacrifice of women and men who have served our nation in times of peace and war. Pray for those currently serving in the military and for their families, especially during times of separation, that they will know they are remembered, valued and cared for by their faith community and siblings in Christ.
- 12 Pray for people who are recovering from hurricanes, storms and flooding here and in other countries. Ask God to displace their grief and despair with hope, their feelings of loss with comfort and wholeness, and their isolation and loneliness with the reassurance that people, congregations and ministries such as Lutheran Disaster Response will stand with them now and for the long haul of recovery and healing.
- 13 Give praise and glory to God! We are alive and free because Jesus died and rose again for the sake of all humankind, that when we pass from this life, we will enjoy life together with God forever.
- 14 Pray for pastors and Christian education leaders who are working through the challenges of confirmation instruction in a time when most congregations are still unable to meet in person. Ask God to lead them toward creative, effective solutions that will nurture and strengthen faith in young people, share the teachings of the church and affirm their roles and gifts as members of the body of Christ.
- 15 Pray that we might trust in God's promises and in the certainty of our salvation through Jesus Christ, and not fret or speculate about when Christ will come again. Ask God to help us live in the present as children of God who share the good news of Jesus Christ, grow the church, strengthen one another and serve their neighbor.
- 16 Give thanks for the people in our daily lives who lift our spirits, inspire our faith, renew our hope and equip us for serving our neighbor.

17 Ask God to guide us through the span of our lives and focus us on learning God's ways, commandments, teachings and priorities along the way.

18 Pray for federal chaplains serving in the U.S. military and Veterans Affairs hospitals as they minister to military members and their families here and around the world. Give thanks for how they touch the lives of young adults, encourage their faith, connect them with faith communities, and provide care and counseling in unique contexts.

19 Some students find studying from home more difficult than others, especially those who live with learning disabilities, have special needs or experience the learning environment best when interacting with peers, teachers and counselors in person. Pray that these students will find the care and attention they need — in person and online — to learn, mature and grow strong in their self-esteem.

20 We direct our attention to God and pray for mercy; we humble ourselves and trust in God's promise of love, forgiveness and new life in Jesus Christ.

21 Pray for those working through the sometimes long and emotional process of becoming foster or adoptive parents. Pray that we might find ways to support and care for them and to celebrate with them the joys of family and parenthood.

22 Ask for God's mercy and forgiveness when we fail to respect our neighbor, care for their needs and love them as Jesus loves us. Pray that our faith will shine in the world through bold yet humble acts of justice, mercy, empathy, advocacy, care and love.

23 Pray that, as followers of Christ who treasure life as a gift from God, we will exercise patience, caution and concern for our neighbor as the COVID-19 pandemic continues long past our expectations and assumptions.

24 Give thanks for followers of Christ and children of God who gather in faith communities everywhere to praise God, grow in faith and celebrate the unity we have in Christ. Pray that we might never show bias toward or rebuff people who are curious and seek the good news we have received.

25 Praise God for our creative siblings in Christ whose hymns stir our faith, inspire us, speak of God's work and express our joy and gratitude to God.

26 *Thanksgiving Day* As we celebrate Thanksgiving, lift up prayers of gratitude for the blessings and abundant resources we enjoy, and remember the people in our communities and world who suffer food insecurity, hunger and poverty. Ask the Spirit to increase our generosity and engagement with our neighbors in need and to help our communities become more just, generous, compassionate and committed to addressing difficult social issues.

27 Pray that we will be humble but not shy about praying in private or with others, trusting that God understands us even when our words — spoken or silent — feel awkward or inadequate.

28 "O come, let us sing to the Lord; let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation!" Like the immense, complex and awesome universe, we are God's handiwork. Raise up prayers of glory and thanksgiving to God!

29 *First Sunday of Advent* This is a year of hope, yearning and anticipation, when we cry out for relief, healing, positive signs of change in the world and reassurance that we'll all be OK. Pray that we will trust in God's promises and presence through faith in Jesus Christ — son of man and son of God, our hope, security and salvation in all times and circumstances.

30 In the course of your day, envision the people who, working behind the scenes in service industries, attend to our needs, ease our stresses, make our lives more enjoyable, help us manage each day and attend to the little things we take for granted. Pray that we will open our eyes and see them, valuing their work, advocating for their fair wages and benefits, and expressing our gratitude for their hard work serving others.

OFFERINGS

Cash Basis:	Sep 20	Sep 27	Oct 4	Oct 11	Oct 18
Total General Offerings	\$4,067.00	\$8,910.13	\$9,003.50	\$6,656.00	\$7,009.50
Budgeted amount needed weekly					
Designated Funds:					
World Hunger	\$110.00	\$220.00	\$20.00	\$220.00	
LWR	\$300.00	\$100.00			
Micah's Cupboard	\$50.00				
Quilting Fund	\$15.00				
Pastor's discr fund					\$75.00
Cemetery fund		\$2,550.80			
Evangelism/Outreach/School			\$10.00		
Synod payment to Vicar		\$3000.00			
Youth fund		\$80.00			
Soup Kitchen	\$100.00	\$25.00	\$20.00		
Operation Christmas Shoebox					
CCM		\$25.00	\$25.00		
Use of building					\$50.00
TOTAL DESIGNATED FUNDS	\$575.00	\$6,000.80	\$75.00	\$220.00	\$125.00

Reserve - Repairs & Maintenance	\$100.00	n/a	\$325.00	\$40.00	\$100.00
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Financial Update at a glance:	August	September	October
Month to date giving	\$27,658.50	\$28,507.13	\$22,719.00
Monthly budgeted amount:	\$42,452.50	\$33,962.00	\$33,962.00

SEPTEMBER 2020 TREASURER'S REPORT

Total income for September 2020 was \$29,107 the budget amount was \$35,000, and September 2019 was \$36,234. September 2019 was a five Sunday month. Total expenses were \$26,978 compared with a budget amount of \$34,056. For the month, income exceeded expenses by \$2,129.

Income for the nine-month period ending September 30, 2020 was \$318,421, compared with the prior year period of \$320,141. Expenses were \$259,405 for this period in 2020, compared with the prior year of \$297,153.

We are very fortunate to have congregants who have the ability and faithfulness to make much appreciated contributions to Mount Olive. For this nine-month period we have been able to control expenses in a favorable manner.

Gerald Burke
Treasurer



**Mt. Olive Members in
Assisted Living or Nursing Facilities:**

Heritage Care
John Beatty

Trinity Village, Springs Road:
Martha Yount
Edna Punch
Lyn Stilley

Brookdale Assisted Living Falling Creek
Gwen Kingsley

Catawba Valley Living at Rock Barn:
Maxine Kirchin

Grace Ridge
Jennie Bost

We are proud of our Mt. Olive members who are continuing their education post high school. **Please remember to keep them in your prayers.**

Emma Barger, Darrius Adam Barger, Ben Bazzle, Brittany Collins, Matt Cook, Keely Horton, Whitney Horton, Derek Moose, Halee Ormand, Markus Pope, Daniel Richter, Kayla Seabock, Paige Shook, Jenna Waters, Katie Tice, Caleb Hedgepeth, Meadow Frye, Leaci Brice.

Prayer List for Members of Mt. Olive

Esther Armstrong	Herman Price
Margaret Barger	Todd Propst
Jennie Bost	Georgia Collins
Chris Brookshire	Frankie Wilson
Brad, Meredith, and	Clyde & Sarah Hull
Owen Elder	Lynette Stilley
Nina Fullwood	Sylvia Whisnant
Mary Gregory	Chip Drum
Eugene Helton	Karen Pruett
Jeanette Huffman	Gail Welch
Linda Huffman	Nancy Arndt
Gwen Kingsley	Becky Psioda
Terry Laxton	Wayne Hefner
Thomas Salley	Rosa & Ronnie Owens
K.C. Setzer	George Pope
Tom Rhea Jr.	Carolyn Sigmon
Tom East	Tony & Diane
Van Seabock	Shacklady
John Beatty	
Sarah Garren Taylor	
Tara Rink	
Sal Rao	
Michael Bock	
Loretta Stephenson	
Miya Teague	
Henry & Thelma Jarvis	

Our Family and Friends

Susan Anderson, friend of Marion Waldon
Wayne Austin, friend of Penny & Tim Lineberger
Shirley Baker, friend of Kathy Starr
Becky Barkley, friend of Ronnie & Roxy Poovey
Anne Barnes, friend of Susy Morrison
Robert Beard, friend of Jimmy Seabock
Bud Beyers, friend of Judy Rao
Kim Birtwistle, friend of Pam Sigmon
Margie Black, friend of Penny Lineberger
David Bolick, friend of John & Kathie Hegert
Belinda Borzich, friend of Darin & Karen Shook
Barbara Boudreaux, friend of Hank & Bernice McCrorie
Bill Canata, friend of McCrorie's
Barbara Van Cleave, cousin of McCrorie's
Eric Cogan-Pat Neill's brother in law
April Colbert, niece of Van & Debbie Seabock
Frances Cranford, friend of Eva Helton
Bill Field, family of June Field
Louise Foster, mother of Paulette Church
Misti Fuller, granddaughter of Mary Gregory
Joyce Garrett, friend of June Field
Christine Gates, friend of Judy Rao
Deborah Gleaton, friend of Amanda Truett
James & Cathy Grant, friend of Rick and Debbie Carmack
Bobbie, Christopher, Jada, and Jason Halle
David Harwood, friend of Hank & Bernice McCrorie
Mary Howell, friend of Teresa Bazzle
Peggy Hollar, mother of Scott Hollar
Kathy Holmes, friend of June Field
Mona Hughes, sister of June Field
Sue Johnson, friend of Pat Neill
Sandy Kauk, friend of Chris & Brenda Bass
Chelsea Larkin, friend of Josh & Courtney Goble
Gregory Larochelle
Tom McCarthy, brother-in-law of Ellis Bolick
Olivia Mason, great niece of Teresa Bazzle
Shelby Mason, niece of Teresa Bazzle
Eric Nilsen, brother of Amy Whaley
Donna Parker, sister of Frances Hallman & Margaret Barger
Lauren Parlier, Paul Rozzelle & Zeke, friend of Amy Whaley
Randall Parsons-friend of Tom & Kate Rhea
Courtney Pearce, granddaughter of Sylvia Whisnant
Barbara Pennell, sister of Kay Hefner and Jeanette Huffman
Richard Rhea, Tom Rhea's brother
Jim Russell, friend of McCrorie's
Alton Piester, brother of Elma Jean Beatty
Terri Brown Robbins, friend of Tom & Kate Rhea
Amanda Rogers, Jim William's sister
Scott Ross, friend of Judy Rao
Jim Russell, friend of McCrorie's
Norene Setzer, Cindy Sullivan's mother
Courtney Spencer, daughter of Jane Kazelman
Janet & Buddy Spoon, friend of Carol Tawney
Jim Starkey & family, friend of Eva Helton
Judy Steele, friend of Judy Rao
Cindy Brittain-White & Abby Brittain-daughter in law of Kate Rhea and granddaughter
Lee Whitfield, McCrorie relative
Ann Widner, friend of Lynn Seabock
Robert & Kaye Ullman-sister, brother-in-law of Nina Fullwood
Jack, friend of Lynne Reed
Kelly, friend of Beth Smith
Raigen, brain surgery
Tim & Erica, son of Carol Tawney

STAFF AND CHURCH LEADERS

Pastor and Teen Ministry:

The Rev. Ryan T. Ray
Cell Phone: 828-310-0776
Email: rray001@luthersem.edu

Vicar (Intern)

Denise Henry
Cell Phone: 704-706-4894
Email: dhenry001@luthersem.edu

Minister of Worship & Music, Deacon:

Lynne Bolick Reed
Email: lynnebreed@gmail.com

**Children's Ministry Deacon
(birth-grade 5)**

Liz Fox
Cell Phone: 704-748-3312
Email: picklejarliz@yahoo.com

Organist/Pianist & Choir Director:

Jenna Waters
Email: waters.j@artist.uncsa.edu

Parish Administrator:

Karen Abernathy
Email: mtolivelutheran@embarqmail.com

Congregation President: Mickey Barnett

Congregation Vice President: Chris Frye

Congregation Council Secretary: Pam Sigmon

Church Treasurer: Gerald Burke

Newsletter information Contact: Karen Abernathy

Email: mtolivelutheran@embarqmail.com

Homebound Communion Contact: Pam Sigmon

Phone: 828-320-1356

Email: jiminy@embarqmail.com

Outreach Team Chairperson:

Tom Atwater 828-256-8627

Prayer Chain Contacts:

Karen Birkedal: 828-495-9372 or 828-303-0239

Frances Hallman: 828-638-1680

Sanctuary Flower Contact: Penny Lineberger

Phone: 828-256-6092

Email: pen_tim@yahoo.com

Micah's Cupboard Contact:

Adeliah Arndt 828-612-9774

WELCA Contact:

Debbie Carmack 828-320-0525

Hospitality Contact: Pat Neill 828-381-5375

CONTACT INFORMATION

Mt. Olive Lutheran Church

2780 North Center Street Hickory, NC 28601

Phone: 828-324-6198 Fax: 828-324-0292

Email: mtolivelutheran@embarqmail.com Website: www.mtolutheran.org

Emergency Contacts information:

Pastor Ryan: 828-310-0776

Worship Times:

Sunday Mornings

8:30 am with Holy Communion

10:45 am with Holy Communion

Office Hours:

Monday through Thursday

8:00 am—4:00 pm

The office is closed on Friday

Our Mission Statement:

In response to the love of Jesus Christ, our mission is:

Believe, Belong, Serve. God's Work. Our Hands.

Mt. Olive Lutheran Church
 2780 North Center Street
 Hickory, NC 28601
 Website:

www.mtolutheran.org

Pastor and Teen Ministry:
 The Rev. Ryan Ray
rrey001@luthersem.edu

Vicar (Intern): Denise Henry
dhenry001@luthersem.edu

Minister of Worship & Music
 Lynne Bolick Reed, Deacon
lynnebreed@gmail.com

Children's Ministry (birth-grade 5)
 Liz Fox, Deacon
picklejarliz@yahoo.com

Organist/Pianist:
 Jenna Waters

Parish Administrator:
 Karen Abernathy
mtolivelutheran@embarqmail.com

Treasurer:
 Gerald Burke

In case of emergency:

Office:

828-324-6198

Pastor Ryan:

828-310-0776

NOVEMBER 2020

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
ALL SAINTS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rev. 7:9-17; Ps. 149; 1 John 3:1-3; Matt. 5:1-12 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ezra 8:24-36; Ps. 115; 1 Peter 1:13-25 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ezra 9:1-15; Ps. 116; 1 Peter 2:1-12 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ezra 10:1-17; Ps. 117; 1 Peter 2:13-25 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ezra 10:18-44; Ps. 118; 1 Peter 3:1-7 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dan. 1:1-2:16; Ps. 119:1-8; 1 Peter 3:8-22 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dan. 2:17-45; Ps. 119:9-16; 1 Peter 4:1-19 7
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dan. 2:46-3:30; Ps. 119:17-24; 1 Peter 5:1-14 8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dan. 4:1-18; Ps. 119:25-32; 2 Peter 1:1-15 9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dan. 4:19-37; Ps. 119:33-40; 2 Peter 1:16-21 10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dan. 5:1-31; Ps. 119:41-48; 2 Peter 2:1-10 11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dan. 6:1-7:8; Ps. 119:49-56; 2 Peter 2:10-22 12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dan. 7:9-28; Ps. 119:57-64; 2 Peter 3:1-13 13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dan. 8:1-27; Ps. 119:65-72; 2 Peter 3:14-18 14
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dan. 9:1-27; Ps. 119:73-80; 1 John 1:1-10 15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dan. 10:1-21; Ps. 119:81-88; 1 John 2:1-14 16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dan. 11:1-19; Ps. 119:89-96; 1 John 2:15-27 17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dan. 11:20-45; Ps. 119:97-104; 1 John 2:28-3:10 18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dan. 12:1-13; Ps. 119:105-112; 1 John 3:11-24 19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Neh. 1; Ps. 119:113-120; 1 John 4:1-21 20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Neh. 2; Ps. 119:121-128; 1 John 5:1-12 21
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Neh. 3; Ps. 119:129-136; 1 John 5:13-21 22	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Neh. 4:1-14; Ps. 119:137-144; 2 John 1-13 23	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Neh. 4:15-23; Ps. 119:145-152; 3 John 1-15 24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Neh. 5:1-13; Ps. 119:153-160; Jude 1-25 25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Neh. 5:14-19; Ps. 119:161-168; Rev. 1:1-8 26	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Neh. 6:1-14; Ps. 119:169-176; Rev. 1:9-20 27	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Neh. 6:15-7:4; Ps. 120; Rev. 2:1-7 28
ADVENT BEGINS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is. 64:1-9; Ps. 80; 1 Cor. 1:3-9; Mark 13:24-37 29	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Neh. 7:5-65; Ps. 121; Rev. 2:8-11 30					